





reception 5-7 november 11
(1966)

sonia gechtoff

redfield lounge gallery
long island university

november

flatbush avenue extension
at de kalb avenue

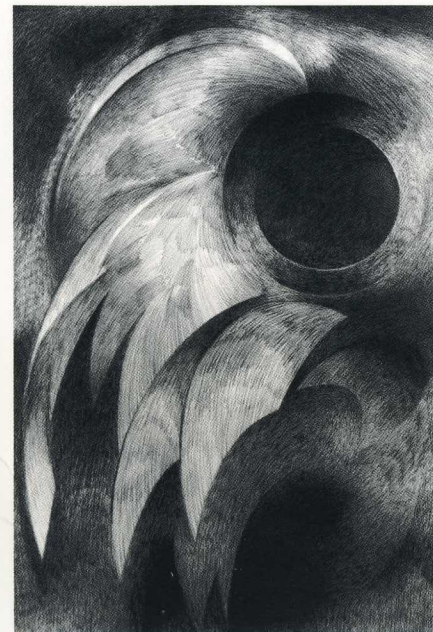
recent paintings

LECHTOFF, SONIA

ADAA
member



COVER: *Celestial Bird*, 1996-7, acrylic on canvas, 54 x 54 inches
INSIDE: *Winged Moon*, 1998, graphite on paper, 56½ x 38½ inches



SONIA GECHTOFF

MYSTERIES IN THE SPHERE

Recent Paintings and Drawings

September 16 – October 14, 1998

724 Fifth Avenue

New York, New York 10019

Tel (212) 307-5730

Since her 1995 retrospective exhibition of works on paper, organized by the Schnick Art Gallery, Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, New York, and shown at Kraushaar Galleries, New York and the Harrison Museum of Art, Logan, Utah, Sonia Gechtoff's work was featured in *The San Francisco School of Abstract Expressionism*, a 1996 University of California Publication written by Susan Landauer with an introductory essay by Dore Ashton. Sonia Gechtoff is represented in over twenty-five museums and corporate collections, and her work is included in the current exhibition of the Poindexter Collection at the Denver Art Museum.

KG KRAUSHAAR GALLERIES



SONIA GECHTOFF



Memory of Cornwall 60 x 54

Cover: Sea God 60 x 54



Odessa 74 x 68

New paintings by Sonia Gechtoff
will be shown from
May 9–June 6, 1992

Opening Saturday, May 9 from two to five

KRAUSHAAR GALLERIES, INC.

724 Fifth Avenue (between 56-57 Street) • New York, NY 10019 • (212) 307-5730

THE THEATER OF THE VISIBLE

—John Loughery

The imaginative world of Sonia Gechtoff is strange territory indeed. In this one artist we have someone whose work is concerned with the exaggerated energy and rhythms of nature, yet equally obsessed with artifice and theater; rooted in the specifics of geography and personal reminiscence, but confidently abstract; at once active, playful, and inviting but also imposing, contained, solid, even fortress-like. Now, the question is: does all of this, in the art of one woman, add up to a set of impossible contradictions, a mad stylistic jumble? Only, I think, for those viewers trained to see by the narrow light of strict genres and tidy ambitions. For the rest of us, this is the kind of painting that speaks through its dichotomies and lives—unsolemnly, almost jauntily—by paradox. It revels in a kind of theatricality, in the labor and joy of invention.

That Gechtoff should be working now in acrylic on large canvas in a style of intense color and disparate shapes—spheres next to zig-zags, towers over leaf forms, undulating lines by weighty bars and bands of color—isn't exactly a surprise, given the preceding stages of her career. The second-generation Abstract Expressionist, who studied in San Francisco in the 1950s while the values of Clyfford Still and Ernest Briggs were a factor of student life there, has always been interested in dramatic painterly effects, a use of color that surges and thrusts. In the fiery sky of *Southwest* or the jagged turbulence of the waves in *Sea God*, or in those very Still-like projections and striations she has long favored, Gechtoff maintains an allegiance-of-sorts to an early influence. (And what a satisfying commitment that is, in a time when the New York School is spoken of so disparagingly in some quarters.) Likewise, her feeling for physical and emotional vitality in art is allied to these modern masters. But there is also Sonia Gechtoff the student of 19th and early 20th-century landscape art, whose travels to Cornwall, to Italy, to Maine, to the American Southwest have provided her with the impressions and memories, the raw material, for an abstracting of natural vistas in the quiet, contemplative spirit of Martin Johnson Heade and Arthur Dove. This period of her career yielded some especially stark, stirring, geometric works in her 1980 show and, even more powerfully, a number of emphatically "geometric landscapes" that made much use of graphite pencil in her 1987 exhibition in SoHo. Finally, throughout the 1980s, many of Gechtoff's paintings capitalized on a formalist's motif that became a central feature of her vision: windows, porches, porticos, all emblems of structure, control, and the containment of raw visual experience.

Now, in 1992, these varied facets come together in a body of work that is very hard to have an easy "take" on, certainly impossible to pigeonhole. For who else these days is painting images as elemental and complicated, as robust and yet massive in their sense of placement? *Memory of Cornwall* hints at the fertility and power of the English countryside, nature bursting forth at the top of the canvas, but incorporates an archway at the bottom that suggests a proscenium (a device used even more explicitly in *Pierced Rock*, not in the current exhibition). *Pillar and Wave* makes use of two contrary physical entities, yet makes them appear equally fidgety, chaotic, solid, cartoonish. The sumptuous *Blue Moon* has a core that's delicate—watery, filled with foam and clouds—but that core is surrounded by what could be the backdrop and the sloping forms of a stage set. *Siena* is a blend of blue, green, violet, and several other colors slipping and spreading across the canvas, while controlling pillars divide the space and restrain the disorder. The pillar in the midst of *Paestum* is an almost haunting counterpoint to the cool orb above it, much like the Russian tower in *Odessa* (Gechtoff's father was Russian-born) plays off against the tree tops and moon to the right, the black sky above, and the charges of electric orange and agitated pinks and blues below. It is almost as if, at every point, the artist would remind us that any view of the world, be it of a beach, a tree, a building, a patch of sky, is filtered through an individual sensibility and shaped by a certain sense of craft. Naturalism is a ruse. All is artifice. The more dynamic, the better.

Most importantly, though, the current phase of Gechtoff's art seems determined to do battle with the quietude of age, with any tendency to rest or retrench. Instead, we're offered a mood and imagery of exploration, activity, even bluster defense. Consider how many of the recent titles deal explicitly with these themes: *Sentinel*, *Pillar and Wave*, *Sea God*, *Guardian of the Green*, *Riders of the Wave*. However pleasing her colors and ostensible subject matter, these paintings aren't about tranquility and a neat, complacent harmony; they are about force and gesture, stature and examination, the act of seeing and the act of making.

In a particularly meretricious age, Sonia Gechtoff occupies herself with what should be the first concerns of any artist: masses and reverberations of color, strength of composition, the residue of her own experience, a cause for meditation that urges the viewer not to move faster, but to slow down, to ponder opposites and potential underlying unities. "Above all, to make you see," as Joseph Conrad wrote. This Gechtoff does, in paintings both gracious and assertive.

ACRYLICS ON CANVAS

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------|
| 1. Odessa | 74 x 68 |
| 2. Blue Moon | 72 x 60 |
| 3. Guardian of the Green | 72 x 60 |
| 4. Southwest | 60 x 72 |
| 5. Riders of the Wave | 74 x 54 |
| 6. Sentinel | 74 x 54 |
| 7. Siena | 60 x 60 |
| 8. Memory of Cornwall | 60 x 54 |
| 9. Paestum | 60 x 54 |
| 10. Sea God | 60 x 54 |
| 11. Pillar and Wave | 34 x 34 |
| 12. Guardian I | 20 x 20 |
| 13. Guardian II | 20 x 20 |
| 14. Small Wave I | 12 x 12 |
| 15. Small Wave II | 12 x 12 |
| 16. Small Wave III | 12 x 12 |
| 17. Small Wave IV | 12 x 12 |

WORKS ON PAPER

John Loughery is the art critic for *The Hudson Review* and the author of the recently published biography *Alias S.S. Van Dine: The Man Who Created Philo Vance*.



Sentinel 74 x 54

GECH TO FF, SONIA

PERMANENT COLLECTIONS

American Telephone & Telegraph, New York

Baltimore Museum of Art, Maryland

Achenbach Foundation, California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco

Chase Manhattan Bank, NA, New York

Chemical Bank, New York

Ciba-Geigy Corporation, New York

Continental Grain Company, New York

General Electric Company, Connecticut

The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York

Harrison Museum of Art, Utah State University

University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Museum of Modern Art, New York

National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, DC

Oakland Museum, California

Prudential Insurance Company of America, New Jersey

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, California

Seattle First National Bank, Washington

Singer Collection, New York

Museum of Art, Stanford University, California

Stephens, Inc., Arkansas

3M Corporation, Minnesota

Woodward Foundation

KG

GECHTOFF, SONIA

Design: Murray Belsky
Printing: Thorner-Sidney Press



End of Summer 1988-89 58 x 48 Acrylic and Graphite on Canvas

SONIA GECHTOFF

NEW PAINTINGS

March 31–April 25, 1990

*Opening reception
for the artist
Saturday, March 31
from two to five*

KRAUSHAAR GALLERIES

724 Fifth Avenue • New York, NY 10019
(212) 307 5730



Moon Rising 1989 60 x 40 Acrylic and Graphite on Canvas

AWARDS

Work on Paper, Mid-Atlantic Regional NEA Grant, 1989
Adolph & Esther Gottlieb Foundation Grant, 1987
Ford Foundation Fellowship to Tamarind Lithos, Los Angeles

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

California School of Fine Art, 1956-1957
New York University, 1960-1970
Queens College, New York, 1970-1974
University of New Mexico, 1974-1975
Painter in Residence, Skidmore College, New York, 1988-1990
Visiting Artist, Art Institute of Chicago, 1989

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

Gruenbaum Gallery, New York, "Works on Paper, 1975-1987", 1987; 1985; 1983; 1982; 1980; 1979
Gloria Cortella Gallery, New York, 1978, 1976
Gallery One, Montclair State College, New Jersey, 1974
East Hampton Gallery, New York, 1966, 1963
Poindexter Gallery, New York, 1960, 1959
Ferus Gallery, Los Angeles, 1959, 1957
De Young Museum, San Francisco, 1957

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

"79th Annual Exhibition," Maier Museum of Art, Randolph-Macon Woman's College, Virginia, 1990
"Abstract Painting of the Fifties," 871 Gallery, San Francisco, 1989
"Paper Now," Weatherspoon Gallery, UNC, North Carolina, 1987
"Selections-Works on Paper," California Palace of the Legion of Honor, 1987
"American Art-American Women," Organized by Stamford Museum, CT, 1985-1986
"Cross Overs," Usdan Gallery, Bennington College, 1985
"Directions in Bay Area Painting-A Survey of Three Decades, 1940's-1960's," Richard L. Nelson Gallery, Davis, CA, 1983
"New Dimensions in Drawing, 1950-1980," Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, CT, 1981
"America Drawn & Matched," Museum of Modern Art, NY, 1977
"Extraordinary Women," Museum of Modern Art, NY, 1977
"California Painting and Sculpture-Modern Era," National Collection of Fine Arts, Smithsonian, Washington, DC & San Francisco Museum of Art, 1976-1977
"The Last Time I Saw Ferus," Newport Harbor Art Museum, Newport Beach, CA, 1976
Phoenix Art Museum Biennial, Phoenix, AZ, 1975
"Women Choose Women," New York Cultural Center, NY, 1973
"East Coast-West Coast Painting," University of Oklahoma & Philbrook Art Center, 1968
"American Abstract Drawings & Watercolors," Selected by Museum of Modern Art, NY, International Council, South America, 1962
"60 American Painters," Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN, 1960
"Young America," Whitney Museum, NY, 1960
Painting Annual, Whitney Museum, NY, 1958
"Younger Americans," Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, NY, 1954.

PERMANENT COLLECTIONS

American Telephone & Telegraph, New York
Baltimore Museum of Art
Achenbach Foundation, California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco
Chase Manhattan Bank NA, New York
Chemical Bank, New York
Ciba Geigy Corporation, Ardsley, New York
Continental Grain Company, New York
General Electric Company, Fairfield, Connecticut
The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
Museum of Modern Art, New York
Oakland Museum of Art, California
Prudential Insurance Company of America, Newark, New Jersey
San Francisco Museum of Art
Seattle First National Bank, Washington
Singer Collection, New York
Stephens, Inc., Little Rock, Arkansas
3M Corporation
Woodward Foundation for US Embassies, Washington, DC

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Albright, Thomas, *Art in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1945-1980*, University of California Press, 1985.
Artists on the Current Scene, Arts Yearbook 4, 1961.
Arts Magazine, January 1988, p. 108.
Brenson, Michael, "Sonia Gechtoff-'City Facades/The Sea'," *The New York Times*, June 8, 1984.
_____, "Sonia Gechtoff's New Directions," *The New York Times*, November 25, 1983.
Henry, Gerritt, *Art News*, December 1987, p. 152.
Kramer, Hilton, "Reflections on Sonia Gechtoff", essay for *Works on Paper, 1975-1987*, Gruenbaum Gallery, 1987.
_____, "Sonia Gechtoff at Her Best at Gruenbaum," *The New York Times*, January 8, 1982.
_____, "Sonia Gechtoff's Abstract Drawing at Its Best," *The New York Times*, October 31, 1980.
_____, "Triumphant New Work by Two Artists," *The New York Times*, May 20, 1979.
_____, "Modern Drawings on 57 Street: Art, A Marriage of Freedom and Form," *The New York Times*, March 24, 1978.
_____, "Art: Her Own Way," *The New York Times*, December 10, 1976.
Mellow, James R., "Sonia Gechtoff: A Different Kind of Knowledge," *Arts Magazine*, February 1982.
_____, "Concerning the Landscapes of Sonia Gechtoff," essay for Gruenbaum Gallery catalogue, October/November 1980.
"New Talent 1959," *Art in America*, Spring 1959.
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art-The Painting and Sculpture Collection, New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1985, p. 304.
Shapiro, Miriam, *A Woman's Sensibility*, exhibition catalogue for California Institute of the Arts, 1975.

recent drawings

SONIA GECHTOFF

Preview: March 8, 5-7 P.M. — March 8 thru March 26, 1966.

EAST HAMPTON GALLERY

22 WEST 56TH STREET, NEW YORK CITY • CI 6-3218

BRUNO PALMER-PORONER, *Director*

SONIA

GECHTOFF

GECHTOFF





(Our drawing related?)

MARCH 30 TO APRIL 25, 1959 • PREVIEW MARCH 30, 5-7

POINDEXTER

GALLERY

21 WEST 56 STREET NEW YORK CITY

TAMARIND LITHOGRAPHY WORKSHOP, INC.

Artist: Sonia Gechtoff
c/o East Hampton Gallery
22 West 56th Street
New York, New York



SONIA GECHTOFF, TAMARIND FELLOWSHIP ARTIST: JULY - AUGUST 1963

"6 Icons," a suite of eight color lithographs 15" x 18", (title page and colophon included) by Sonia Gechtoff, priced at \$400 (boxed), was completed at Tamarind during Miss Gechtoff's two-month fellowship. The iconography of the images is based in Russian Orthodox tradition. Circular forms and cross shapes appear and reappear in the wine reds, golds and purples of the lavish pageantry of church ritual.

Miss Gechtoff also created eight single lithographs as variations on the same theme. Working primarily in black and white, the artist used delicate tusche washes to render the interiors of the icon shapes. Frequently these were pulled in red-black or green-black ink to subtly influence the color cast of the delicate wash areas. The eight single prints range in size from 13" x 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ " to 22" x 30" and are priced from \$50 to \$150. Both the suite and the single lithographs exist in editions of twenty impressions hand-printed on Rives BFK paper by artisan-printers Jason Leese, John Dowell and Kenneth Tyler under the technical direction of Irwin Hollander, master-printer.

Born in Philadelphia in 1926, Sonia Gechtoff received her B.F.A. degree from the Philadelphia Museum School of Art in 1950, and studied lithography at the California School of Fine Arts, San Francisco, in 1952. One-man shows include the Dubin Gallery, Philadelphia 1950; Lebaudt Gallery, San Francisco 1952; Six Gallery, San Francisco 1954; Ferus Gallery, Los Angeles 1957 and 1958; De Young Museum, San Francisco 1957 and Poindexter Gallery, New York 1959 and 1960.

LIBRARY
LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

OCT 20 1967

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

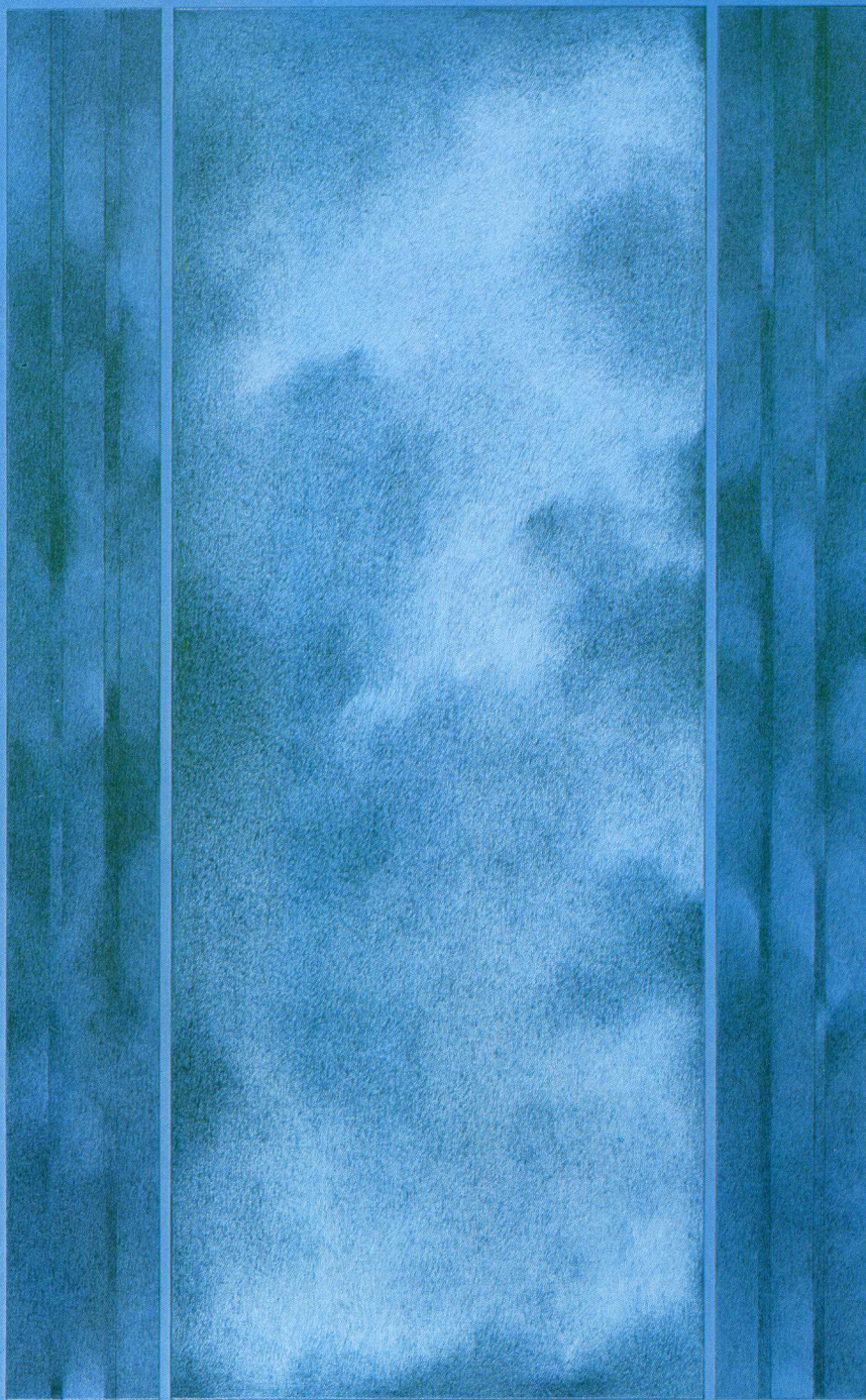
LOS ANGELES, October 1, 1963 -- "6 Icons" a suite of eight color lithographs (title page and colophon included) by Sonia Gechtoff, priced at \$400 (boxed) has just been completed at the Tamarind Workshop during Miss Gechtoff's two month fellowship in California. The iconography of the suite is based in Russian Orthodox tradition. Circular forms and cross shapes appear and reappear in the wine reds, golds and purples associated with the lavish pageantry of church ritual. One lithograph from this suite was chosen by Art Forum Magazine for its September 1963 cover.

Since 1960, the artist's paintings have treated this theme, exploiting the visual impact and emotional weighting of the symbols. At Tamarind she continued the motif but varied the approach to suit the medium, amplifying in a pure graphic dimension the sensuality already revealed in the painting.

In addition to the "6 Icons" suite, Miss Gechtoff created eight single lithographs as variations on the same theme. Working primarily in black and white, the artist used delicate tusche washes to render the interiors of the icon shapes. Frequently these were printed in red-black or green-black ink to subtly influence the color cast of the delicate wash areas. The eight single prints range in size from 13x10 $\frac{1}{4}$ " to 22x30" and are priced from \$50 to \$150. Both the suite and the single lithographs exist in small editions of 20 impressions. The artist's editions were hand-printed on Rives BFK paper by printer-fellows Jason Leese, John Dowell and Ken Tyler under the technical direction of Irwin Hollander, master printer of Tamarind. Arches and Nacre were used for the Tamarind Impressions.

Born in Philadelphia in 1926, Sonia Gechtoff received her BFA degree from the Philadelphia Museum School of Art in 1950, and studied lithography at the California School of Fine Arts, San Francisco in 1952. One-man shows include the Dubin Gallery, Philadelphia 1950; Labaudt Gallery, San Francisco 1952; Six Gallery, San Francisco 1954; Ferus Gallery, Los Angeles 1957 and 1958; De Young Museum, San Francisco 1957 and Poindexter Gallery, New York 1959 and 1960.

SONIA
GECHTOFF



John Galt 1990

GECHTOFF, SONIA

We Are Pleased To Announce That

Sonia Gechtoff

Is Exclusively Represented By

THE GRUENEBAUM GALLERY

COVER
Interior Silver
40x28 inches
Pencil & Acrylic on Paper
1978

LIBRARY
DEC 20 1985
LOS ANGELES COUNTY
MUSEUM OF ART



SONIA GECHTOFF

Works on Paper

1975 - 1987

September 26 - October 24, 1987

Cover: DOUBLE WATERFALL
acrylic and pencil on paper, 1986-87
46½ x 39¾ inches

LENDERS TO THE EXHIBITION:

The Baltimore Museum of Art
The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum
The Metropolitan Museum of Art
The Museum of Modern Art
Mr. and Mrs. Steven Jacobson
Barbara and Morgan Lamarche
Estee Lauder, Inc.
Julian Weissman and Karen Gunderson



WILD WAVE

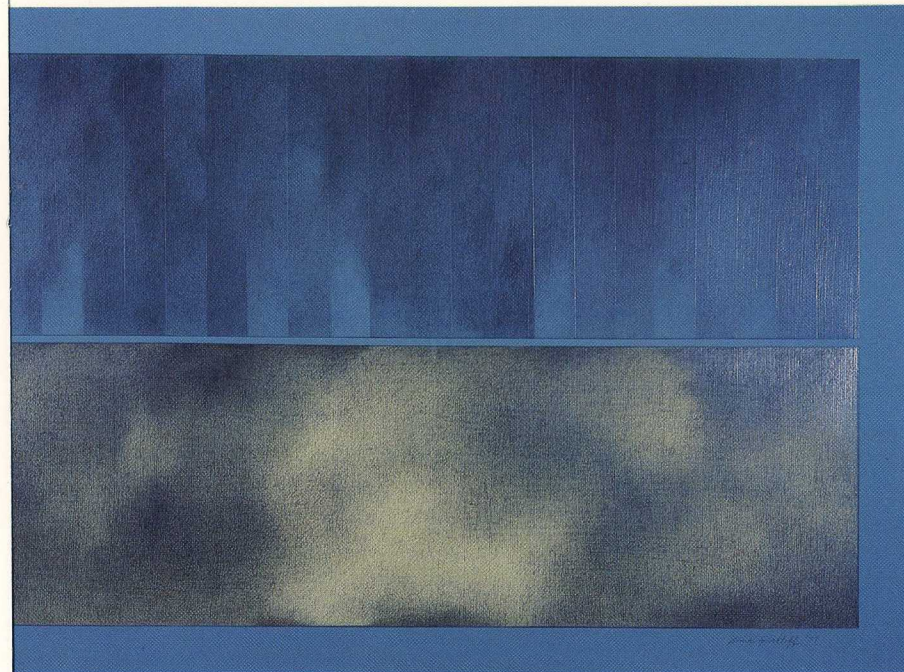
acrylic and pencil on paper, 1983
14 x 13 inches

REFLECTIONS ON SONIA GECHTOFF

By Hilton Kramer

There is a passage in one of the early travel essays of Henry James that I often think of when I see the paintings of Sonia Gechtoff — especially the pictures of water subjects that occupy so large a place in the work this painter has turned to in the last dozen years. The essay, written in 1871, is James's account of his visit to Niagara to see the Falls. Even at that early date Niagara Falls was, of course, already a hackneyed subject for the travel writer, the landscape painter, and innumerable producers of posters and cheap souvenirs. Yet James's artist's eye straightaway offers us a succession of images so vivid, so colorful, so finished and pictorial, and still so unmistakably personal that we are instantly made to feel we are in full possession of this vision for the first time.

It is the particular way that James takes note of certain man-made elements in his landscape subject that I am reminded of in Sonia Gechtoff's pictures, for in her images, too, there is a similarly conceived formal dialogue between nature and artifice, which in pictorial terms resolves itself in a dramatic synthesis of the organic and the geometrical. James approached Niagara by way of a morning's sail across Lake Ontario. As a prelude to what he calls "the great spectacle of colour which you enjoy at the Falls," he offers his readers the first of his many pictorial images: "The even cliffs of red-brown earth are crusted and spotted with autumnal orange and crimson, and, laden with this gorgeous decay, they plunge sheer into the deep-dyed green of the river." In his first view of the Falls — "a huge far-flashing sheet which glares through the distance as a monstrous absorbent and irradiant of light" — he picks out an "obstructive bridge [that] tends in a way to enhance the first glimpse of the cataract." He then writes of this bridge: "Its long black span, falling dead along the shining brow of the Falls, seems shivered and smitten by their fierce effulgence, and trembles across the field of



HOMAGE TO HEADE

acrylic and pencil, 1978
26 x 34 inches

vision like some enormous mote in a light too brilliant." He hasn't alighted yet from the train taking him into the village, but he has already given us a picture that is complete and unforgettable.

In the pictures that Sonia Gechtoff has produced in the 1970s and 80s, we enter a world and an imagination that are very different, to be sure, from anything to be encountered in nineteenth-century travel writing or, for that matter, in nineteenth century landscape painting. The imagery is unmistakably modern and of our time. Its pictorial language owes much to the aesthetics of abstraction. The liberties the artist takes with color, with the depiction of objects, and with the manipulation and control of her medium are all unimaginable outside the context of modern painting. Even if we didn't know that she had achieved her first fame as an abstract painter, we could certainly guess that her sensibility was steeped in the inventions of modernist art and completely at ease with the licenses they long ago established for the pictorial artist. With their abrupt elisions of space and their collage-like juxtapositions of objects and atmospheres, these are pictures clearly tethered to a syntax that is modernist in its fundamental assumptions. Even in their color, however romantic it may sometimes be, these pictures partake of a freedom and audacity that have their origins in the modernist movement.

Yet one of the things that sets these pictures apart and gives them a special distinction is their unquestioned affinity with a mode of visionary landscape art that we associate with certain nineteenth-century American writers and painters. In one of the pictures in the present exhibition — **Homage to Heade** (1978) — the artist makes explicit reference to this source of inspiration in acknowledging her debt to Martin Johnson Heade, and elsewhere she has paid similar homage to Heade's contemporary, Frederic Erwin Church. There is no question here of replicating the modalities of nineteenth-century Romantic landscape painting. The task the artist has set herself is to find a form that effectively evokes the spirit of the old landscape masters while at the same time remaining completely faithful to the way such landscape subjects — and nature itself — are experienced in the modern world.

Toward nature, which for the modern city-dweller is certain to be a more fugitive and fragmentary experience than it was for the painters and writers of the nineteenth century, the artist obviously feels a tender piety; but the art she has made out of that emotion bears no trace of nostalgia. There is nothing in Sonia Gechtoff's art that offers us an exit from the modern world. The experience of

nature in these pictures is of something precious — a source of pleasure and transcendence — but also of something fractured and contingent. It is an experience that has to be sought out and pursued, either by leaving home or by searching the skies outside one's window. In this pursuit of nature, the artist gathers her impressions, collects her motifs and the memories and sensations that are an inseparable part of them, and forms by slow stages that reservoir of emotion without which nothing in art is finally possible.

What we are often and emphatically reminded of in these pictures, however, is that the experience of nature to be found in them is the experience of an urban sensibility that is drawn irresistibly to precisely those subjects where nature and civilization meet and confer an aura of romance upon each other. Not only in the motifs that are drawn from the great cityscapes of London and New York but in virtually all of the artist's images — those of the coastal regions of Maine and New Jersey and Cornwall and Devon no less than those of Lower Manhattan or the public gardens of central London — everything here is seen through the eyes of an artist who is a modern city-dweller and specifically a New Yorker. It hardly matters whether the artist is perched by her window high above the Hudson River or footloose on a foreign terrain, every new sensation is registered in relation to an aesthetic outlook that is ineluctably urban.

This has certain consequences in the way the pictures have been conceived, for their pictorial structure is a reflection of their urban origin — and a reminder, too, of the fact that these are, after all, studio pictures. They are not executed directly from nature. Just as the eyes of those who live their lives for long periods in close proximity of the sea tend involuntarily to seek out the wide, straight line of the horizon wherever they may find themselves — and to miss it acutely where they do not find it — eyes habituated to the repeated and inescapable vertical lines and incessant "framing" of the modern metropolis will likewise develop a certain disposition to align every particle of observation in a way that conforms to visual habit. In Sonia Gechtoff's pictures, we are made to feel both the pressure of this involuntary disposition and the visual drama that derives from its denial and complication. I have already spoken of the synthesis of the organic and the geometrical in her work, and it is in the way these pictures are firmly anchored in their geometric frames of vibrant color that we behold their urbanistic origins. Nature enters these pictures as an emblem of the organic and the unruly — which is why, I suppose, the artist is so often drawn to water subjects and to the sky,

Cover: DOUBLE WATERFALL
acrylic and pencil on paper, 1986-87
46½ x 39¾ inches

LENDERS TO THE EXHIBITION:

The Baltimore Museum of Art
The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum
The Metropolitan Museum of Art
The Museum of Modern Art
Mr. and Mrs. Steven Jacobson
Barbara and Morgan Lamarche
Estee Lauder, Inc.
Julian Weissman and Karen Gunderson

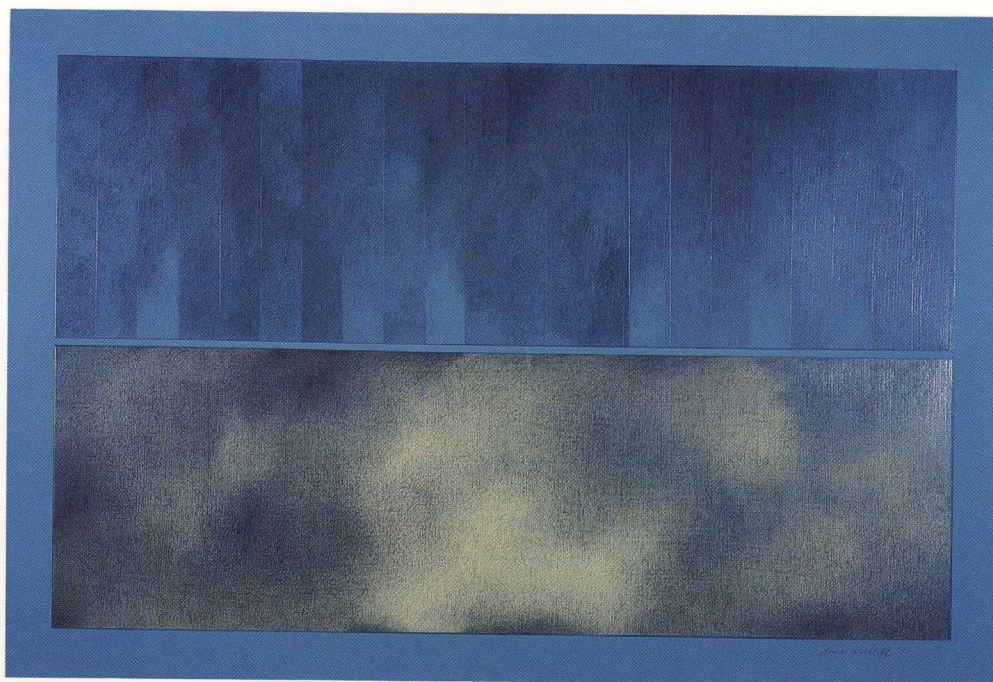


for nothing in nature seems as free and as uncontainable as they are. Yet it is their pictorial destiny in these pictures to be firmly framed, if not wholly contained. This framing carries an immense pictorial weight in Sonia Gechtoff's art — it is anything but a "negative" element — yet it also acts as a support to everything that is most lyrical and transcendent in her imagery.

In evolving this very personal synthesis of the organic and the geometrical in her art, Sonia Gechtoff must be seen to belong to that larger development in contemporary painting that has so often been observed in recent years — the turn toward a reconsideration of the representational in art. It is a development that has taken a sometimes bewildering variety of forms, from the most academic versions of realism to the most hermetic species of symbolism. Often, as in her case, it is a development that has grown out of a prior involvement with abstraction. In her art, at least, the principles of abstraction have not been abandoned but subsumed in a pictorial enterprise that abstraction alone could no longer sustain. At the time that she first entered upon this new phase of her art, it seemed a brave and isolated move. She belonged to no "school," and there was little but her own aesthetic conviction to sustain her headlong plunge into a new way of working. Yet she accomplished something that it was often said artists could no longer do — she created something entirely her own, and entirely original. And it turned out that she wasn't, after all, as isolated as she seemed at the time. For that turn toward the representational in art must now be seen as the dominant development of the period covered by this exhibition, and in that development the art of Sonia Gechtoff has already won a secure place.

SELECTED PUBLIC COLLECTIONS:

Museum of Modern Art, New York
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York
Baltimore Museum of Art, Maryland
San Francisco Museum of Art, California
Oakland Museum of Art, California
Achenbach Foundation, California Palace of the Legion of
Honor, San Francisco, California
Singer Company, New York
Woodward Foundation for U.S. Embassies,
Washington, DC
American Telephone and Telegraph, New York
Chase Manhattan Bank, New York
Continental Grain Company, New York
General Electric Company, Fairfield, Connecticut
Chemical Bank, New York
Ciba Geigy Corporation, Ardsley, New York
Prudential Insurance Company of America, Newark,
New Jersey
Seattle First National Bank, Seattle, Washington
Harris 3 M Corporation, Atlanta, Georgia



HOMAGE TO HEADE

acrylic and pencil, 1978
26 x 34 inches

GECHTOFF, SONIA



FIRST DOOR TO CORNWALL

acrylic and pencil on paper, 1984-85
48 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 40 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches

Mr. Thomas Gruenebaum
and Mr. Harm Bouckaert
request the pleasure of your company
at a preview and reception in honor of

Sonia Gechtoff

Saturday, September 26, 1987
from 2:00 until 6:00 o'clock p.m.

at the Gruenebaum Gallery
415 West Broadway, New York



Gruenebaum Gallery, Ltd. 415 West Broadway, NYC 10012 212-966-3646